**From:** Denise Simmons
**To:** Alpert, Neal
**Subject:** Re: Information About Israel/Boycott HP Campaign/"Israel = Apartheid" Movement
**Date:** Thursday, April 12, 2018 4:59:24 PM

---

Thanks

On Mon, Apr 9, 2018 at 4:21 PM, Alpert, Neal <nalpert@cambridgema.gov> wrote:

> Hi Denise, just as some prep-work/background information on the "Boycott HP/End Israeli Occupation" resolution that apparently will be coming up on April 23, I'm sending you two items from two opposing viewpoints. **The first is the summary of where John Ratliff/Mass Peace Action are coming from – the camp of urging the City Council to boycott HP and other companies "…until they end their current support for Israel's institutionalized violence against** Palestinians." Following that, I have cut and pasted a New York Times op-ed piece from 2017 that supports the view of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League folks we met with earlier today.
>
> # Mass Peace Action (Support the Resolution to Have Cambridge Divest from/no longer purchase HP computers):
>
> ### Why you should join the movement against "The Polaroid of Our Times"
>
> Massachusetts Against Hewlett Packard is a coalition of groups and activists formed in 2016 that calls for all municipalities, universities, and Massachusetts institutions to end the purchasing and procurement of both HP Enterprise and HP Incorporated products until they end their current support for Israel's institutionalized violence against Palestinians.
>
> In Cambridge, Massachusetts Against Hewlett Packard will submit a resolution to the city council on April 23rd, 2018 asking that the city stop purchasing and procuring products through rate contracts the state of MA holds with HP Inc. and HPE and purchase instead through rate contracts the state holds with other companies.
>
> ### Why Boycott HP in Cambridge?
>
> Cambridge has a long history of leadership on issues of human rights: from declaring itself a sanctuary for immigrants in 1985, to blazing the trail in the fight against South African apartheid in the 1970s and 80s. xi xii With no legal obligations to continue purchasing and procuring HP products, now is the time for Cambridge to cut all ties with HP Inc. and HP Enterprise and continue the city's tradition of standing on the side of oppressed people around the world.
>
> ### The International Movement Against HP is Working!
>
> More than 1.8 million people have signed a petition calling on HP to end its role in Israeli apartheid, including over 2,500 MA residents and over 700 Cambridge residents.
>
> The global campaign targeting HP has seen significant positive progress with HP no longer

operating access control systems at Israeli checkpoints and the apartheid wall.

**Join Us: Now is the time to increase pressure!**

Plan to attend the city council hearing and vote on our resolution for Cambridge to boycott HP,
Monday April 23, 5:30pm, Cambridge City Hall – bring your friends!

Add your name to our volunteer sheet so we can help you get involved (in ways big or small!)

Send our website (massagainsthp.com) to your friends!

Like our Facebook (facebook.com/MassAgainstHP) & follow our Twitter @massagainsthp

## COUNTER-POINT from JEWISH ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE: The "Mass Against HP" resolution is really a Trojan Horse designed to financially harm Israel, turn world opinion against Israel, and ultimately, ideally, lead to the dissolution of Israel so that a Palestinian State can instead be located there:

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/31/opinion/why-israel-is-nothing-like-apartheid-south-africa.html

**OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR**

# Why Israel Is Nothing Like Apartheid South Africa

Israeli border police officers arresting a Palestinian boy during clashes after the killing of a Palestinian militant by Israeli forces last month.CreditMajdi Mohammed/Associated Press

**By Benjamin Pogrund**

March 31, 2017

JERUSALEM — Among critics of Israel, it has become ever more common to accuse the Jewish state of imitating apartheid South Africa. This month, an obscure United Nations agency, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, whose membership comprises 18 Arab states, caused an uproar when it issued a report accusing Israel of applying the same racism in its conflict with Palestinians that made South Africa an international pariah. The United Nations secretary general swiftly repudiated the report, and it was removed from the agency's website.

The idea that Israel is an apartheid state is a staple of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, which has made the South African comparison practically the lingua franca of anti-Israel activism. It's a grave charge: If the accusation is valid, Israel deserves the censure, boycotts and isolation that the B.D.S. movement demands. But announcing it loudly and ceaselessly, as the movement does, doesn't make it true.

**Here's why the apartheid comparison does not stack up.**

Apartheid in South Africa maintained privilege for the white minority and doomed people of color to subservience; it determined every aspect of life — the school you attended, the work you did, where you lived, which hospital and ambulance you used, whom you could marry, right down to which park bench you could sit on without facing arrest.
I know this because I lived it.

Born in Cape Town in the 1930s, I went to work for The Rand Daily Mail in 1958, a Johannesburg-based newspaper that pioneered comprehensive coverage of black life in the mainstream press: the arrest every year of more than 350,000 black people who transgressed the "pass laws" that controlled where they were allowed to live and work; starvation in the rural areas, with babies dying from severe malnutrition; awful housing, transportation and health care; torture by the security police and detention without trial.

For more than a quarter-century, I reported and analyzed the evils of apartheid. Through my work, I became friends with black leaders, notably Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress and Robert Sobukwe of the Pan-Africanist Congress. With my editor, the renowned Laurence Gandar, I spent four years on trial for my reports about abusive prison conditions. I was denied a passport for five years.

In 1985, The Rand Daily Mail was closed by its commercial owners under pressure from the government. I was so identified with its liberalism that I couldn't get a job. Britain gave me sanctuary and I became a Fleet Street journalist.

Then came an invitation to start a dialogue center in Jerusalem. My wife and I moved here in 1997. I spent the next 12 years working to bring people together: Jews of opposing political persuasions; Jews, Christians and Muslims; and increasingly, Israelis and Palestinians. Then and since, I have researched and written extensively about the country that has become my second home.

I remain committed to both Israel and South Africa, and I straddle both societies. I am acutely aware of Israel's problems and faults, but it is nothing like South Africa before 1994. Those who accuse Israel of apartheid — some even say, "worse than apartheid" — have forgotten what

actual apartheid was, or are ignorant, or malevolent.

The differences begin with “Israel proper,” as defined by the borders after the 1948 and 1967 wars, where Arabs are 21 percent of the population.

Here, Arabs certainly suffer discrimination. Most Arabs are exempted from military service, thus losing veteran benefits; but Druze Arabs are conscripted like Jews, and Bedouin can volunteer. Arab towns are not easily allowed to expand, but growing populations need housing, so people build illegally — and then the government demolishes their homes. And there is racism, too — whether it is Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu making a nakedly anti-Arab appeal on Election Day in 2015 when urging his Jewish supporters to vote or rabbis calling on Jews not to rent or sell real estate to Arabs.

Unlike nonwhite South Africans under apartheid, however, Israeli Arabs have the vote and enjoy full citizen rights. The Supreme Court has an Arab judge, the head of surgery in a leading hospital is Arab, and Arabs head university departments. In hospitals and clinics, Jewish and Arab doctors and nurses, secular and religious, work together, giving care equally to Jewish and Arab patients — unthinkable under apartheid. Even the current right-wing government has pledged billions of dollars to upgrade Arab living conditions and education (though it has yet to deliver much).

As for the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which Israel captured from Jordan in 1967, this is an occupation. The army essentially controls about 2.7 million Palestinians, whether in the 60 percent of the West Bank under direct Israeli control or in the other parts nominally under the Palestinian Authority.

The Oslo accords in 1993 between Israel and Palestinians were supposed to bring about peace and a Palestinian state in the West Bank, but both sides fouled up. Palestinians stepped up terrorist attacks, helping to drive many Israeli Jews to the right. In the absence of a peace agreement, Israel continued to build settlements: Some 600,000 Jews now live in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem.

No question, Israel lays itself open to attack for its actions in the West Bank. Its misdeeds and the undermining of the two-state solution through settlement-building provide abundant ammunition for critics. What the B.D.S. movement calls the “apartheid wall” — in fact, mainly a wire fence,

except in populated areas — was erected between Israel and the West Bank for security reasons, primarily to keep out would-be suicide bombers. Regrettably, as it was constructed, the wall also became a means of enclosing and grabbing additional West Bank Palestinian land. That was ugly and grasping, but it has nothing to do with apartheid-style racial segregation.

The occupation is an oppression. No rule over an unwilling and resistant people can be pleasant, and enforcement is harsh. But from my perspective, there is none of the institutionalized racism, the *intentionality*,that underpinned apartheid in South Africa. So why does the B.D.S. movement insist otherwise?

Founded by Palestinians in 2005, the movement has spread internationally and is now embraced by a heterogeneous alliance of Muslims, Christians, anti-Zionist Jews, right-wingers and left-wingers. **Anti-Semitism is evident among certain B.D.S. supporters.** Even in Israel, some on the left go along with the apartheid accusation out of despair at being unable to end the occupation or halt the country's move toward right-wing extremism.

ADVERTISEMENT

The movement points to the boycotts it says brought down apartheid, and argues that this is the way to attack Israel. That belief is simplistic and mistaken. While boycotts were certainly important, they were not as decisive as B.D.S. supporters claim. A combination of factors pressured white South Africa into surrendering power. The most significant was the end of the Cold War, which meant that while black liberation movements lost Soviet support, whites lost the crucial backing of their anti-Communist Western patrons.

During the yearslong struggle for freedom in South Africa, the African National Congress, now in government, refrained from violence against white civilians, with very few exceptions. This was, in large part, a strategic decision to avoid scaring whites into a refusal to yield power. **Suicide bombings and murders by ramming pedestrians with vehicles never happened in South Africa. Yet Israel has had them aplenty. Security concerns have dictated Israel's precautions and responses, not an ideology of apartheid racism.**

The most deceptive of the B.D.S. movement's demands is for the return of

Palestinians who fled Israel or were chased out at gunpoint, mostly in the 1948 war. This “right of return” seems reasonable and just, but relatively few people realize that — uniquely among the world’s 65 million refugees — the Palestinians’ descendants are defined as refugees. The original 750,000 Palestinian refugees now number six million to seven million. A mass return would destroy Israel as a Jewish state, which is the whole purpose of its existence.

**South African apartheid rigidly enforced racial laws. Israel is not remotely comparable. Yet the members of the B.D.S. movement are not stupid. For them to propagate this analogy in the name of human rights is cynical and manipulative. It reveals their true attitude toward Jews and the Jewish state. Their aims would eliminate Israel. That is what’s at stake when we allow the apartheid comparison.**

Benjamin Pogrund is the author of “Drawing Fire: Investigating the Accusations of Apartheid in Israel.”

*Follow The New York Times Opinion section on Facebook and Twitter, and sign up for the Opinion Today newsletter.*

A version of this article appears in print on April 1, 2017 of the National edition with the headline: Why Israel is nothing like apartheid. Order Reprints | Today’s Paper | Subscribe

--
*E. Denise Simmons*